

alia, "... providing a probe for extending into an interior of a container for applying the atomized sterilant into the interior of the container," as recited in claim 11. Additionally, Kelbrick et al. fails to teach or suggest, *inter alia*, "... means for applying the atomized sterilant to an interior of a container by extending a probe into the interior of the container," as recited in claim 21.

Claims 3 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kelbrick et al in view of Muys et al. The Examiner states that "Kelbrick et al fails to disclose the following element in Kelbrick et al devise as the bottles are the objects that are being sterilized in this process. However, Muys et al discloses that element in Muys et al devise as shown in figures 1-3." Furthermore, the Examiner states "[C]learly, the combination of these two references will reveal the same invention as the applicant is claiming." Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection as follows.

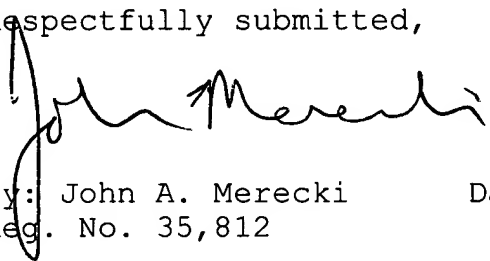
As presented in the arguments above, Applicants assert that independent claim 1 is allowable. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 3 which is dependent on claim 1 is allowable. Similarly, Applicants assert that independent claim 11 is allowable. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 13 which is dependent on claim 11 is allowable.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1-8, 10-18 and

20-22 are allowable and that the rejections under 35 U.S.C.
102(b) and 103(a) be withdrawn.

If the Examiner believes that any further discussion of the
invention would be helpful, perhaps in the form of an Examiner's
Amendment, Applicants' representative is available at (518) 220-
1850, and earnestly solicits such discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John A. Merecki". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long horizontal stroke.

By: John A. Merecki
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